

# Maryland

## Affiliate helps advocate for public health

**F**OR THE MARYLAND Public Health Association, public health advocacy is a priority. So when it came time to organize its National Public Health Week events, it made sense that advocacy would be in the spotlight.

An April 5 Silver Spring, Maryland, event taught attendees “why public health professionals present a particularly important voice in the advocacy landscape,” said MdPHA Advocacy Chair Rebecca Rehr, MPH. Participants learned key times to weigh in during the legislative process as well as how to present data to legislators. Public health practitioners were taught how to combine data with storytelling techniques that make for impactful arguments in the name of public health.

“When we as public health professionals talk to our friends and talk to our colleagues, we use jargon that we don’t consider jargon anymore,” which is why language must be accessible and resonate with a broad audience, Rehr, an APHA member, told *The Nation’s Health*.

MdPHA used its NPHW networking event as an opportunity to teach local public health practitioners how to advocate for the causes important to them. Participants also learned about two of MdPHA’s priorities during the legislative session: a drug cost review commission and reducing lead action levels to protect children.

The timing of the event was critical, with just a few days left in the Maryland legislative session.

“Not only do elected officials not have a formal public health (background), but they’re inundated with thousands of different issues in a 90-day period,” Rehr said.

For more information, visit [www.mdpha.org](http://www.mdpha.org). ■